

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the reasons that follow. Claims 1, 6, 7 and 10-15 are now pending in this application.

Statement of Substance of Interview

In accordance with the request in the Interview Summary dated March 5, 2006, that the applicant file a statement of substance of interview, please be advised that the Examiner's Interview Summary accurately summarizes the interview.

Prior Art Rejections

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2002-206977. Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2002-206978 in view of JP 2002-206977. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant submits that JP 2002-206977 and JP 2002-206978, which were both published on July 26, 2002, are not prior art for claims 1, 6, and 7 because these claims are entitled to the priority date of provisional application 60/394,815, which was filed on July 10, 2002. The present application is a Continuation-In-Part of U.S. Application No. 10/604,319, which claims the benefit of 60/394,815.

Applicant submits that claims 1, 6, and 7 are entitled to the priority date of provisional application 60/394,815 because claims 1, 6, and 7 have support in the disclosure of provisional application 60/394,815.

Claim 1 recites "an anchor connecting member for connecting the anchor to a vehicle body," which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 5, lines 25-28, 32-33; page 6, line 1; Figures 5 and 6. Claim 1 further recites "a webbing connecting member connected to the seat belt," which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 5, lines 28-32; Figures 5 and 6. The language "a sensor mechanism which detects a force acting between these members, wherein the webbing is inserted into a hole provided in said webbing connecting member and connected by folding back the same" of claim 1 is supported in 60/394,815 at,

for example, page 5, lines 30-32; page 6, lines 6-25. Claim 1 recites “wherein a portion of the webbing inserted into said hole is folded back from both sides in the width direction, and the width is reduced by bonding the folded portion with the portion not folded,” which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 6, line 26, to page 7, line 14; Figures 5 and 6.

Claim 6 recites “an anchor connecting member connected to a vehicle body,” which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 5, lines 25-28, 32-33; page 6, line 1; Figures 5 and 6. The language “a webbing connecting member connected to the seat belt” of claim 6 is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 5, lines 28-32; Figures 5 and 6. Claim 6 further recites “a webbing comprising one end connected to the webbing by a first stitching to thereby form a looped portion connected to the webbing connecting member,” is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 6, lines 26-32; Figure 5. The language “wherein a portion of the webbing adjacent to the looped portion is not folded and wherein the looped portion includes a folded portion and a transition portion that fans out from the folded portion to join the unfolded portion of the seat belt” of claim 6 is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 6, line 26, to page 7, line 14; Figure 5. Claim 6 further recites “wherein the first stitching is located in the unfolded portion of the belt and wherein a second stitching is located in the folded portion to constrain the webbing from unfolding,” which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 6, line 26, to page 7, line 28; Figures 5 and 6. Claim 6 further recites “a sensor mechanism arranged to overlay the anchor connecting member and the webbing connecting member, wherein the sensor mechanism is configured to detect a force applied between these members,” which is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, page 5, lines 30-32; page 6, lines 6-25. The language “wherein the surface on which said anchor connecting member is connected to the vehicle body and the surface on which said webbing connecting member is connected to the seat belt are in the same plane” is supported in 60/394,815 at, for example, Figures 13b, 14b.

The Office argues that the recitation of the width being “reduced by bonding the folded portion with the portion not folded” was added by the CIP application. Applicant submits that this language is supported by the stitching discussed in 60/394,815, for example, at page 6, line 26, to page 7, line 14; Figures 5 and 6. Applicant submits that stitching is a form of bonding and that this language is supported by the disclosure of

60/394,815. The Office notes in the Interview Summary of March 5, 2007 that the stitching disclosed in 60/394,815 is not the bonding recited in claim 1. However, Applicant submits that 60/394,815 provides support for stitching that meets the language of claim 1, for example, as shown in Figure 6 of 60/394,815.

The Office argues that Figures 13b and 14b do not show an anchor plate 12 and carriage 106 as being in the same plane. However, this is not the feature that is recited in the claims. Claim 6 recites “the surface on which said anchor connecting member is connected to the vehicle body and the surface on which said webbing connecting member is connected to the seat belt are in the same plane” (emphasis added). Therefore, the claims recite that the connecting surfaces of an anchor connecting member and a webbing connecting member are in the same plane. The Office further argues that the carriage is not an anchor connecting member or a webbing connecting member. However, as shown in Figures 13b and 14b, the carriage 106 includes surfaces that are connected to the webbing 12 of a seat belt 14.

For at least the reasons discussed above, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 10-15.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are

needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date April 4, 2007

By May Michelle Kile, Reg. No. 35217

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 672-5582
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

fc Howard N. Shipley
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 39,370